



**The Kazan Icon of the Mother of God**

**Which the Holy Church Celebrates on October 22**

This celebration of the Most-holy Theotokos, in honor of her Icon known as the Kazan Icon, was established in thanks to her for having saved Moscow and all Russia from the attack of the Poles in 1612. The late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries are known in Russian history as the Time of Troubles. The nation was attacked by Polish armies, who mocked the Orthodox Faith, looted and burned churches, towns and villages. By means of deceit, they succeeded in seizing Moscow. In response to the appeal of His Holiness Patriarch Hermogenes (commemorated on May 12) the Russian people rose up in defense of the homeland. The miraculous Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos was sent from Kazan to join the militia led by Prince Dimitry Mikhailovitch Pozharsky.

In his "Homily on the day of the appearance of the Icon of the Mother of God in Kazan" (celebrated July 8), Holy Hierarch Dimitry of Rostov (commemorated September 21) said: "The Mother of God saves from great misfortunes and evils not only the righteous, but also the sinful, but what manner of sinners? Those, who like the prodigal son, return to their Heavenly

Father; who lament [lover their sins]; who, like the publican, beat their breasts; who are like the sinful woman that wept at the feet of Christ and washed His feet with her tears; those who, like the thief on the cross, confess Him. The Mother of God looks after such sinners and rushes to help them, and saves them from great misfortunes and evils.”

Recognizing that the misfortune had been permitted because of their sins, the entire people and militia observed a 3-day fast, and turned to the Lord and His most-pure Mother for divine help. Their prayers were heeded. The holy Hierarch Arseny (later to become bishop of Suzdal), who was a prisoner of the Poles, sent word that he had had a vision revealing, by the intercession of the Most-holy Virgin, that God's judgment been had turned to mercy. Inspired by this news, the armies on October 22, 1612 liberated Moscow from the Polish occupiers. The celebration in honor of the Kazan Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos was established in 1649. To this day, that Icon is highly venerated by the Russian Orthodox people.

*Dismissal Hymn of the Mother of God. Fourth Tone*

**O** FERVENT intercessor, Mother of the Lord Most High, thou prayest for all to thy Son, Christ our God, and thou causest all to be saved who have recourse to thy powerful protection. O Sovereign Lady and Queen, help and defend all of us, who in troubles and trials, in pain and burdened with many sins, stand before thy most pure icon in thy presence, and pray to thee with compunction of soul, contrition of heart, and with tears, who have unflagging hope in thee. Grant to all what is good for us, deliverance from all evil, and save us all, O Virgin Theotokos, for thou art a divine protection to thy servants.

*Kontakion of the Mother of God. Plagal of Fourth Tone*

**L**ET us run, O ye peoples, to that quiet and good haven, to the speedy helper, to the ready and warm salvation, to the Virgin's protection. Let us hurry to prayer and hasten to repentance; for the most pure Theotokos poureth out for us unfailing mercy, anticipateth our needs with her help, and delivereth from great disasters and evils her upright and God-fearing servants.

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